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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/796,359	03/09/2004	John Riley Hawkins	DEP5260	2263

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08933-7003

EXAMINER

RAMANA, ANURADHA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3733

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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09/18/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/796,359	Applicant(s) HAWKINS ET AL.	
	Examiner Anu Ramana	Art Unit 3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 July 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33,35,36,44 and 46-48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 28-33,35,36,44 and 46-48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 April 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on July 21, 2008 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 28-33, 35-36, 44 and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 28 and 44, the limitation "concave contour that is substantially parallel to the convex contour" renders the claims vague and indefinite. It is unclear what structural relationship is being claimed by the Applicant. The Examiner suggests the use of alternate language such as "a common center of curvature" to clearly define the structure.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

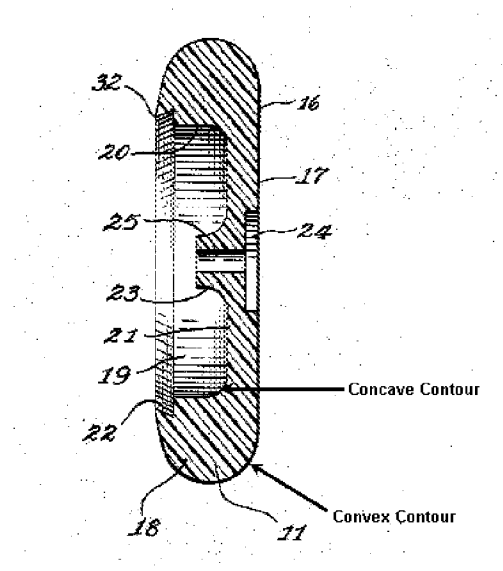
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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 44 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Duncan, Jr. (US 3,805,443).

Duncan, Jr. discloses a device including: a central body 12; a first extension 10 separate from the central body; a second extension 11 separate from the central body; and a rivet 13 wherein a first portion of the rivet is integral with one of the extensions and a second portion of the rivet is integral with the other of the extensions wherein the rivet is located in a lower half of the extensions (Figs. 2 and 6, col. 1, lines 37-68 and col. 2, lines 1-67). Note that the rivet is in the lower half of the extensions wherein the lower half is defined by a longitudinal axis of each extension. Also, see marked up Fig. 3 from Duncan, Jr. below.

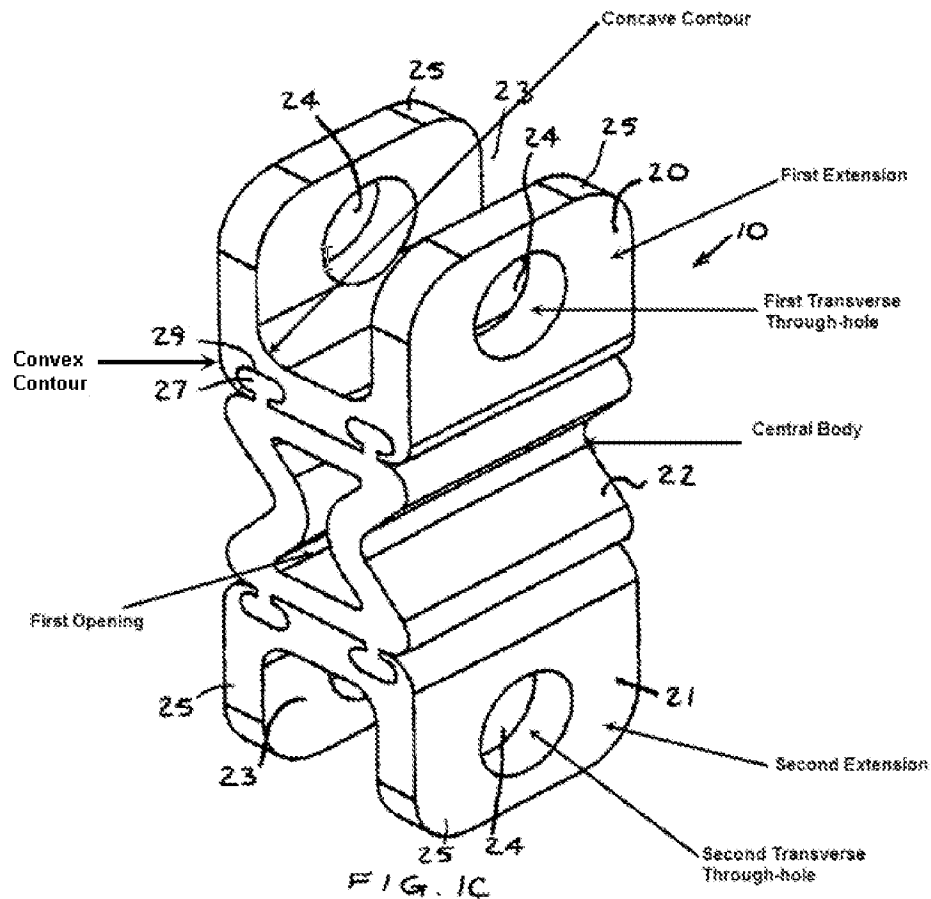


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It is noted that a claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. Ex parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987).

Claims 28-30, 44 and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Arnin et al. (US 7,011,685).

Arnin et al. disclose an interspinous implant including a central elastomeric body 22, a first extension 20, a second extension 21, and a rivet passing through a hole 24 in the first extension and thus having a first portion integral with the extension and a rivet passing through a hole 24 in the second extension (Fig. 1C, col. 3, lines 42-67 and col. 4, lines 1-36). Arnin et al. disclose the extensions to be made of titanium. It is noted that a rivet inherently has a male part or pin and a female part or pin. See marked up Fig. 1C from Arnin et al. on the following page.



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 28-33, 35-36 and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Duncan, Jr. (US 3,805,443) in view of Hoult (US 1,985,032).

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Duncan, Jr. discloses all elements of the claimed invention except for a rivet having a first connecting pin having a male end and a second connecting pin having a female end. See previous discussion of Duncan, Jr.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to substitute a two part rivet having a male end and a female end as, for example, taught by the Hoult reference for the rivet of the Duncan, Jr. device wherein so doing would amount to a simple substitution of one known fastener for another known fastener for the predictable result of fastening.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on July 21, 2008 have been considered but are not persuasive for the following reasons.

Arnin et al. clearly disclose extensions, each extension having an inner concave contour and an outer convex contour that follows the inner concave contour; wherein at least a portion of the outer convex contour shares a common center of curvature with the inner concave contour.

Duncan, Jr. clearly discloses first and second extensions, each extension having an upper end, a lower end, an inner surface having a convex contour and an outer surface having a concave contour as illustrated in marked up Fig. 3, provided earlier in this action. The inner concave contour follows the outer convex contour and at least a portion of the inner concave contour shares a common center of curvature with the outer convex contour.

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 58 are moot since this claim has been canceled (see "Listing of the Claims").

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anu Ramana whose telephone number is

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(571) 272-4718. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

AR
September 13, 2008

/Anu Ramana/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3733